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The National Center for School and College Television conducted a survey and a conference to assess television materials now being offered in social studies education. Questionnaires (125) were sent to educational television stations, closed-circuit television facilities, public school systems, and state departments of education. These questionnaires revealed that 55 per cent of all telecourses are designed for the elementary level. A majority of all courses are recorded. At the conference twelve specialists in social studies and school television evaluated existing television materials. They found weaknesses in content (there was little use of the major concept approach) and in presentation (the introductions and teacher's manuals were poor). The specialists made suggestions for future directions in social studies television instruction. The final section of the report lists all telecourses studied at the conference with their title, producer, production location, grade level, and the number, length, and frequency of broadcasts. (RP)

NSCT NEWS Supplement
Number 8

National Center for School and College Television
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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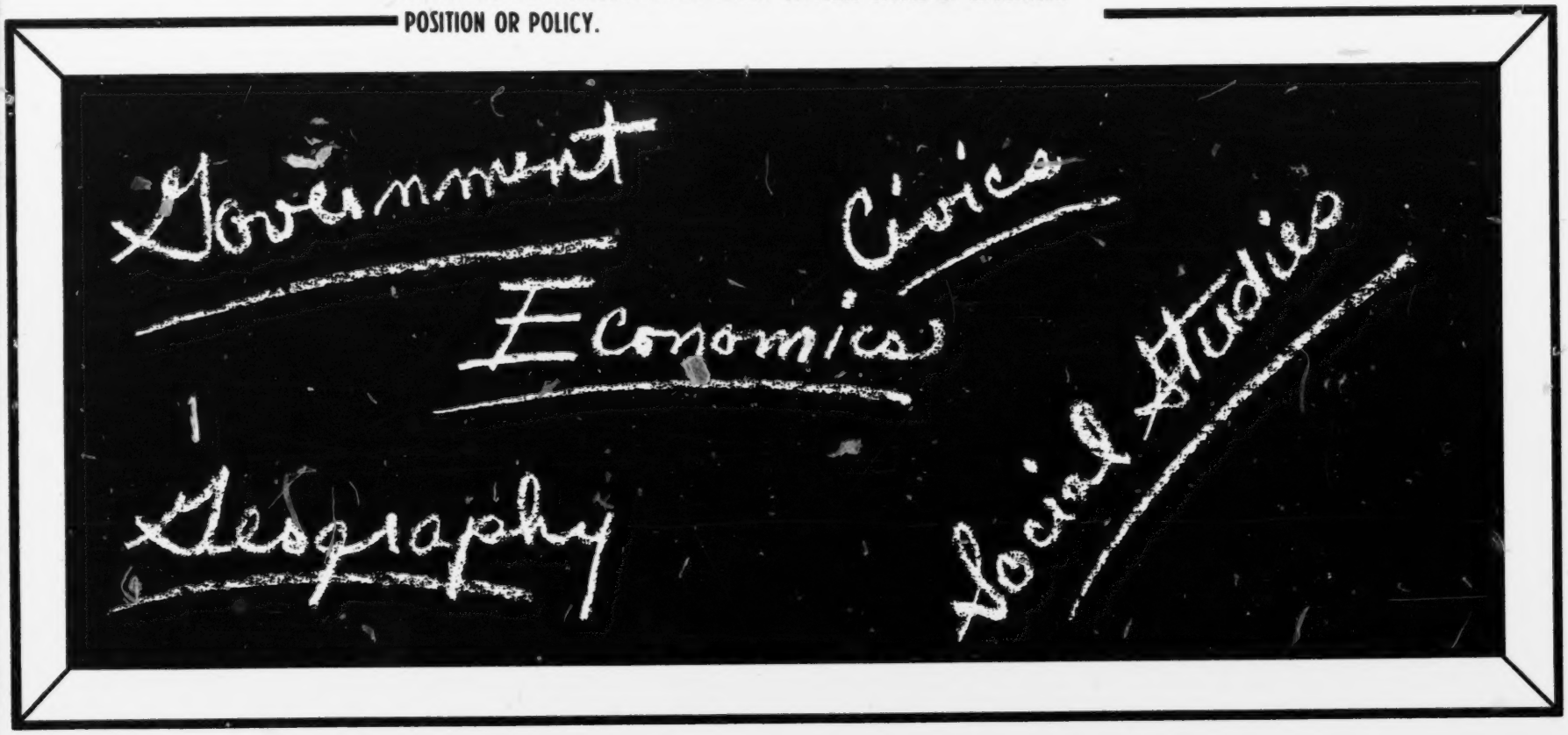

TELEVISION IN SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

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This report concerns the National Center for School and College Television's conference on television in social studies education. The conference was conducted to assess television materials now being offered in social studies education in an effort to stimulate the development of increasingly effective television programing. This report is divided into three sections:

- *Part I is a status report of social studies education telecourses being offered in the United States.*
- *Part II is an overview of the discussion among the social studies and television specialists who participated in the conference.*
- *Part III is a tabular breakdown of the information gathered. The materials listed in this section form the basis for Part I. Lessons from most of the telecourses listed here were viewed during the conference. The courses are categorized by the following division: social studies, history, geography and civics-economics-government.*

The conference participants reviewed print materials (mainly "Teacher's Manuals" which accompany television materials), viewed sample lessons from the telecourses, and, during the final session, considered the state of television in social studies education.

The authorities who assessed the television materials are Robert Ackerman, University of Omaha; Ben Cox, University of Illinois; Stanley Dimond, University of Michigan; Richard Drake, Berea College; Maxine M. Dunfee, Indiana University; Lester Jipp, State Department of Public Instruction, Vermont; Theodore Kaltsounis, State University of New York; Carl Planinc, Southern Illinois University; Vincent Rogers, University of Minnesota; Malcolme Searle, National Council for the Social Studies; Frederick R. Smith, Indiana University; and Huber Walsh, University of Toledo.

Part I—The Status of Television in Social Studies Education

For this conference, NCSCT directed more than 125 questionnaires to ETV stations, closed-circuit television facilities, public school systems and state departments of education. The replies to those questionnaires form the quantitative basis of this report. No commercial materials are considered.

Ninety-nine telecourses were found in use in elementary, secondary and higher education.

ELEMENTARY GRADE LEVEL

GRADE EMPHASIS Fifty-five percent of all telecourses were designed for use at the elementary level, primarily in the intermediate grades (43 percent of all telecourses). Primary materials accounted for 13 percent of all offerings (23 percent of all elementary level telecourses).

Of the 55 elementary telecourses, 33 were in social studies, 11 in history, seven in geography and four in civics-economics-government.

FREQUENCY OF TRANSMISSION As can be seen from the chart below, the majority of elementary level telecourses (36) were transmitted at the rate of one lesson each week. The twice weekly rate was next in frequency (eight), followed by the three times weekly rate (five), four times weekly (four) and twice monthly (two).

RECORDED OR UNRECORDED Approximately 20 percent of the telecourses at the elementary level were not recorded. A few of these telecourses (and some on other levels) were recorded, but within a day or two were erased, and thus were unavailable for later use or for replay.

SECONDARY GRADE LEVEL

GRADE EMPHASIS Forty-one percent of all the telecourses were designed for use at the secondary grade level. Ten of these were in the social studies area, 16 in history, four in geography and 11 in the civics-economics-government group.

FREQUENCY OF TRANSMISSION Fifteen of the 41 secondary level telecourses had a transmission rate of one lesson each week. Next most frequent rate was four times weekly (10), followed by three lessons weekly (7), twice weekly (6) and twice monthly (1). Only one telecourse was transmitted daily.

RECORDED OR UNRECORDED Fourteen of the 41 telecourses were not recorded for later use. Here again, some telecourse lessons were recorded but almost immediately erased, eliminating the possibility of repeated usage.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Only two series were designed for college level use and one for in-service teacher education. The in-service series was in geography, while the collegiate materials were in history and economics. All three telecourses were recorded for later use.

Transmission Rate	Elementary	Secondary	Collegiate and In-Service	Total
1/wk	36	15	1	52
2/wk	8	6	2	16
3/wk	5	7	0	12
4/wk	4	10	0	14
5/wk	0	1	0	1
2/mo	2	2	0	4
	55	41	3	99

Part II—An Overview

Under the auspices of the National Center for School and College Television, 12 specialists in social studies and school television, representing various colleges and universities as well as public schools and related professional groups, evaluated existing television materials, discussed the potential of television in social studies education and made suggestions for the development of more effective materials. Materials viewed were divided into four categories: social studies, history, geography and civics-economics-government.

METHOD OF VIEWING

Lessons were not viewed in their entirety. If after viewing the initial part of a lesson the group felt that it could make a valid judgment, it would ask that the film or video tape be stopped. Occasionally, one of the viewers would request to see the end of a particular lesson, but few lessons were viewed from beginning to end. The viewing established a general impression of television's adequacy in social studies rather than detailed criticism of particular lessons.

For each one of the lessons the specialists used an evaluation form for their impressions. The form indicated the overall objectives of the series each lesson represented and provided space for general evaluation of each lesson's content, overall effectiveness and the teaching techniques employed.

This overview summarizes the deliberations of the group by presenting (1) the identified weaknesses of the telecourses, (2) the strengths which characterized them and (3) some suggestions for future directions.

IDENTIFIED WEAKNESSES

The major weaknesses of the telecourses are related to lesson *content* and lesson *presentation*.

The content. Especially at the elementary level, content consists mostly of giving information or describing events, places and situations. School television is not using as well as it might the concept-oriented approach to teaching social studies. Whether a particular lesson concerns the local community or some far distant country, there is little effort to identify a limited number of "big ideas" and to allow these "ideas" to be the criteria for the selection of facts and other specifics to be taught.

In certain telecourses, an attempt is made to use the concept approach. Here, however, concepts overload the lessons. Children clearly cannot develop all the concepts presented. As a result, children do not use facts to understand better the concepts. What is necessary is a balance between fact and concept.

More often at the secondary than at the elementary level is content in many ways biased. The bias is obvious in lessons dealing with such topics as "Communism" and "The Depression." But even in lessons dealing with housing

in this country biased content shows only beautiful suburban homes and overlooks urban housing and its problems.

Most lessons leave little room for children to deliberate. In most cases, television treats children as passive listeners and observers. Too often there are too many lessons in one course, thus forcing classes to spend all their social studies time with television.

The presentation. Because of poor introductions, students often have to wait too long to find out what the lesson concerns. A parallel weakness appears in the teacher's manuals which accompany the telecourses. The objectives listed in the manuals are too often teacher-oriented in terms of what he ought to do rather than student-oriented in terms of what the children should learn or develop.

An impressive number of activities and some effective audio-visual aids are in use at the elementary level. Activities, however, are usually presented for the sake of having activities, and not for the purpose of clarifying concepts. Many activities are too long. While some of the audio-visual aids are well-planned and effective, maps and globes, basic instruments in social studies instruction, can be more often used.

At the secondary level, activities decreases and lecturing increases. Indeed, there is just too much lecturing. Most such lecture presentations could be accomplished without television. Generally speaking, the secondary teacher is less inventive in his presentation than his elementary school counterpart.

Several television teachers demonstrate unusual talent but there is a tendency among them to act rather than teach. In presenting current events, for instance, teachers often imitate news broadcasters rather than use techniques more appealing to children. In dealing with foreign countries, teachers often sound like tour guides.

IDENTIFIED STRONG POINTS

Some courses are polished productions. The better produced programs are at the secondary level.

Many of the teachers do demonstrate great potential, but need to become more familiar with television's strengths and weaknesses. Elementary teachers seem especially well acclimated to the medium.

At the secondary level the content is more substantial than at any other level.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE DIRECTION

Social studies instruction by television is not accomplishing what it ought. Generally speaking, the majority,

if not all of the members of the assessment group, feel there is a need for someone to take the initiative to align school television with the new trends and ideas in social studies education.

It is clear that television should be used to assist the teacher and not to replace him. Consequently, one of television's main functions should be to bring to the classroom that which the teacher is unable to do. It is impossible, for example, for every class in the nation to visit the United Nations, but the United Nations can be brought to every class through television.

The specialists oppose long series of lessons providing complete and comprehensive coverage and favor a limited number of excellent depth studies designed to stimulate classroom analysis and deliberation.

In relation to the need for open-ended lessons, those involved in producing materials are urged to become familiar with the problem-solving approach. Social studies deals with human relationships. Television can present actual conflicts and issues, and allow children to suggest possible solutions. For example, the U.S. war on poverty should be presented in terms of the conditions that create it rather than in terms of official statements on how to abolish it. When children become aware of the conditions of poverty they can suggest and discuss possible solutions and even evaluate the government's proposed solutions.

To eliminate the information giving, descriptive approach in teaching social studies, telecourses ought to be organized around basic concepts. Furthermore, skills, including map skills, should be taught in context.

There is a need for an expert producer-director who should be a member of a team consisting of teacher, subject matter specialist and possibly a psychologist.

Toward the end of the deliberations the question was raised as to the exact role of a national organization such as the National Center for School and College Television. Should it simply advise or should it produce programs for national distribution and consumption? Though these questions were not answered to everyone's complete satisfaction, a number of interesting thoughts were expressed. One member argued that national production might be impractical since many social studies concepts are based on regional and contemporary specifics. Another member argued that on sensitive topics, such as Communism, it is better to have expert productions for national use to avoid biases due to provincial pressures. A third specialist expressed the view that any national program agency would impose itself upon individual schools. However, others countered that schools at the local level are not obligated to use any programs.

Part III—Television in

TITLES OF TELECOURSES	PRODUCER	PRODUCTION LOCATION	GRADE	NO. OF LESSONS	LESSON LENGTH	FREQ. OF BRDCST.
SOCIAL STUDIES						
PRIMARY LEVEL						
BAY AREA ADVENTURE	KQED	San Francisco, Calif.	3	28	20′	1/wk
COMMUNITY HELPERS	WNED	Buffalo, New York	K-1	15	20′	1/wk
ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES	KCSD	Kansas City, Mo.	3	6	15′	3/wk
GREATER OMAHA—WINDOW TO THE WEST	KYNE	Omaha, Neb.	3	18	15′	2/mo
IN AND OUT OF THE CITY	KCTS	Seattle, Wash.	2	18	15′	1/wk
LEARN WITH ME. I. II. III.	WDCN	Nashville, Tenn.	1-3	105	15′	3/wk
LET'S TAKE A FIELD TRIP	KUSU	Logan, Utah	3	28	20′	1/wk
SOCIAL STUDIES	Valley Instr. TV Assoc.	Sacramento, Calif.	3	28	15′	1/wk
SOCIAL STUDIES—GRADE 2	KDPS	Des Moines, Iowa	2	30	15′	2/wk
YOUR COMMUNITY	MPATI	Lafayette, Ind.	3	16	20′	1/wk
YOUR WORLD	Georgia ETV Network	Atlanta, Ga.	1	66	15′	2/wk
INTERMEDIATE LEVEL						
AMERICANA	Santa Ana Unified & Jr. Col. Dist.	Santa Ana, Calif.	5	104	20′	3/wk
CHILDREN OF OTHER LANDS	WNDT	New York, New York	3-4	30	20′	1/wk
CHILDREN OF OTHER LANDS	WNDT	New York, New York	4-6	30	20′	2/wk
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS	KTCA	St. Paul, Minn.	1-6	18	15′	1/wk
DISTANT NEIGHBORS	WEDU	Tampa, Florida	6	35	25′	1/wk
DOWN MEXICO WAY	WDCN	Nashville, Tenn.	6	8	29′	1/wk
EXPLORATIONS WITH BUCKY BEAVER	KOAP	Portland, Ore.	4	10	20′	1/wk
EXPLORING OUR WORLD	KDPS	Des Moines, Iowa	4	63	15′	3/wk
IT'S A WIDE WORLD	KTCA	St. Paul, Minn.	4	40	20′	2/wk
IT'S YOUR COMMUNITY	WVIZ	Cleveland, Ohio	3-4	32	15′	1/wk
OUR NATION'S CAPITOL	WDCN	Nashville, Tenn.	5	7	29′	1/wk
OUR WORLD WINDOWS	WHRO	Norfolk, Va.	6	34	20′	1/wk
OUT OF THE PAST	WDCN	Nashville, Tenn.	6	13	29′	1/wk
PATHWAYS TO PEOPLE	KQED	San Francisco, Calif.	4	28	20′	1/wk
ROADS TO DISCOVERY	KERA	Dallas, Texas	4-5	16	14′	1/wk
SOCIAL STUDIES 5	Anaheim Elem. Schls.	Anaheim, Calif.	5	92	18′	3/wk
TACOMA, WASHINGTON, USA	KTPS	Tacoma, Wash.	4	32	20′	1/wk
TENNESSEE'S CAPITOL CITY	WDCN	Nashville, Tenn.	4	6	29′	1/wk
THIS IS CONNECTICUT	WEDH	Hartford, Conn.	3-5	26	20′	1/wk
WHERE ON EARTH?	KQED	San Francisco, Calif.	6	27	20′	1/wk
WONDER WHY	WSIU	Carbondale, Ill.	4-6	64	20′	2/wk
YOUR MINNESOTA	KTCA	St. Paul, Minn.	4	12	15′	1/wk
SECONDARY LEVEL						
AMERICANS ALL	KRMA	Denver Pub. Schls., Denver, Col.	5-8	31	20′	1/wk
BEYOND THE AMERICAS	WDCN	Nashville, Tenn.	7	67	29′	2/wk
CULTURES AND CONTINENTS	WCNY	Syracuse, New York	10-12	13	30′	1/wk
FAR-AWAY PLACES	WDCN	Nashville, Tenn.	5-8	40	29′	1/wk
NEW HORIZONS	KERA	Dallas, Texas	6-7	16	14′	1/wk
OF THE PEOPLE	WNED	Buffalo, New York	7	10	20′	1/wk
PEOPLE AND THEIR WORLD	WQED	Pittsburgh, Pa.	6-7	30	20′	1/wk
PLACES IN THE NEWS	WNYE	Brooklyn, New York	7-9	36	20′	1/wk
VIRGINIA: CRADLE OF OUR NATION	WHRO	Norfolk, Va.	7	100	20′	3/wk
WORLD CULTURES	WHRO	Norfolk, Va.	9	130	25′	4/wk
HISTORY						
PRIMARY LEVEL						
ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES	Baltimore City Pub. Schls.	Baltimore, Md.	K-3	6	15′	1/wk
INTERMEDIATE LEVEL						
ALABAMA STORIES	Birmingham Area ETV	Birmingham, Ala.	4	31	15′	2/wk
AMERICAN HISTORIC SHRINES	WNYE & N.Y.C. BD. of ED.	New York, N.Y.	4-5	20	20′	1/wk
OUR NEBRASKALAND	KYNE	Omaha, Neb.	4	9	20′	1/wk
OUR NEW HAMPSHIRE	WENH	Durham, N.H.	4	22	15′	1/wk
RED RIVER BASIN	KFME	Fargo, North Dakota	4-6	20	20′	2/wk
SEE FOR YOURSELF	WVIZ	Cleveland, Ohio	5-6	16	20′	2/mo
THE ARTS—OUR COUNTRY	Eugene Schl. Dist.	Salem, Ore.	5	10	15′	1/wk
THE ARTS—PACIFIC NORTHWEST	Eugene Schl. Dist.	Salem, Ore.	4	10	15′	1/wk
THIS IS UTAH	UNIT & KUSU	Logan, Utah	4	32	20′	1/wk
UTAH GLIMPSES	KUSU		4-7	29	10′	1/wk

Social Studies Education

TITLES OF TELECOURSES	PRODUCER	PRODUCTION LOCATION	GRADE	NO. OF LESSONS	LESSON LENGTH	FREQ. OF BRDCST.
		SECONDARY LEVEL				
ALABAMA HISTORY	Birmingham Area ETV	Birmingham, Ala.	9	48	30′	3/wk
AMERICAN HISTORY	Detroit Pub. Schls.	Detroit, Mich.	7-8	73	25′	2/wk
AMERICAN HISTORY	WFPK	Louisville, Ky.	11	141	25′	4/wk
AMERICAN HISTORY	WHRO	Norfolk, Va.	8	130	23′	4/wk
ISSUES AND IDEAS	WCVE/WCVW	Richmond, Va.	11	60	30′	2/wk
NEW ENGLAND FIELD TRIPS	WGBH	Boston, Mass.	5-8	10	30′	1/wk
OKLAHOMA HISTORY	KOKH/KETA	Oklahoma City, Okla.	9	62	25′	4/wk
PROJECT: HISTORY	KLRN	Austin, Texas	11	15	20′	2/mo
TENNESSEE HERITAGE	WDCN	Nashville, Tenn.	8	24	24′	3/wk
UNITED STATES HISTORY	KOKH/KETA	Oklahoma City, Okla.	9	186	30′	4/wk
UNITED STATES HISTORY	KOKH/KETA	Oklahoma City, Okla.	10	186	30′	4/wk
UNITED STATES HISTORY	WDCN	Nashville, Tenn.	11-12	66	24′	2/wk
U.S. HISTORY	WDCN	Nashville, Tenn.	9-12	72	29′	3/wk
U.S. HISTORY	WUNC	Chapel Hill, N.C.	11-12	170	30′	5/wk
UTAH IN PERSPECTIVE	KUSU	Logan, Utah	7	32	20′	1/wk
WORLD HISTORY	WDCN	Nashville, Tenn.	10	65	29′	2/wk
		COLLEGIATE LEVEL				
THE AMERICAN HERITAGE	Brigham Young Univ.	Provo, Utah	Col.	36	45′	2/wk
		GEOGRAPHY				
		PRIMARY LEVEL				
LET'S TAKE A TRIP	WFPK	Louisville, Ky.	3	70	20′	4/wk
		INTERMEDIATE LEVEL				
ADVENTURES IN GEOGRAPHY 5	WFPK	Louisville, Ky.	5	70	20′	4/wk
ADVENTURES IN GEOGRAPHY 6	WFPK	Louisville, Ky.	6	70	20′	4/wk
GEOGRAPHY—4th GRADE	KRMA	Denver, Colo.	4	34	20′	1/wk
UNITED STATES GEORGRAPHY—CITIES OF THE U.S.	Detroit Pub. Schls.	Detroit, Mich.	5	18	25′	1/wk
WHERE IN THE WORLD?	WFPK	Louisville, Ky.	4	70	20′	4/wk
WORLD GEOGRAPHY	Birmingham Area ETV	Birmingham, Ala.	4	34	15′	2/wk
		SECONDARY LEVEL				
OTHER LANDS—OTHER WAYS	Baltimore City Pub. Schls.	Baltimore, Maryland	6-7	5	15′	1/wk
SCIENTIFIC GEOGRAPHY	KOKH	Oklahoma City, Okla.	7	124	25′	4/wk
THE CHANGING EARTH	KLRN	Austin, Texas	7-9	29	20′	1/wk
WORLD GEOGRAPHY	KDPS	Des Moines, Iowa	7	100	20′	3/wk
		IN-SERVICE				
TEACHING GLOBES AND MAPS	KPEC	Clover Park, Wash.	In-S	20	30′	2/wk
		CIVICS-ECONOMICS-GOVERNMENT				
		INTERMEDIATE LEVEL				
ECONOMICS EDUCATION	KTCA	St. Paul, Minn.	5-6	11	15′	1/wk
JAPAN: A WAY OF LIFE	KCET	Hollywood, Calif.	4	8	20′	1/wk
NEWS OF THE WEEK	San Diego State College	San Diego, Calif.	4-7	**	15′	1/wk
SPOTLIGHT ON AFRICA	KCET	Hollywood, Calif.	4	7	20′	1/wk
		SECONDARY LEVEL				
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT	KLRN	Austin, Texas	11	9	20′	2/mo
AMERICANISM VERSUS COMMUNISM	Florida ETV Comm.	Tallahassee, Fla.	9-12	30	30′	3/wk
CITIZENSHIP	Birmingham Area ETV	Birmingham, Ala.	9	48	30′	3/wk
COMMUNISM VERSUS DEMOCRACY	WTVI	Charlotte, N.C.	9-12*	32	60′	4/wk
GOVERNMENT	KOKH	Oklahoma City, Okla.	8	124	20′	4/wk
KNOW YOUR WORLD	KCET	Hollywood, Calif.	5-8	15	20′	1/wk
PERSONAL FINANCE	WHRO	Norfolk, Va.	9-12	60	20′	4/wk
PRACTICAL POLITICS	WGBH	Boston, Mass.	9-12	4	15′	1/wk
THE AMERICAN WAY	WDCN	Nashville, Tenn.	12	68	29′	2/wk
THE COMMUNISTS	KVIE	Sacramento, Calif.	9-12	7	20′	1/wk
THE RED MYTH	KQED	San Francisco, Calif.	12	13	30′	1/wk
		COLLEGIATE LEVEL				
BASIC ECONOMICS	WCVE/WCVW	Richmond, Va.	Col.	30	45′	1/wk

* Also used as IN-SERVICE.

** Varies from year to year.

National Center for School and College Television
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THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR SCHOOL AND COLLEGE TELEVISION serves all institutions concerned with the use of television in education. NCSCT makes available recorded lessons of the highest quality for preschool, elementary, secondary, college, extension, industrial, and continuing professional education.

To relate its activities to the major needs of institutions throughout the United States, NCSCT works closely with content specialists, administrators, professional groups, and regional organizations.